

Palaces of Sand and Gold

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Palaces of Sand and Gold

by [RenneMichaels](#)

Summary

Domestic Loki, Tony one shots.

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Chapter 1 - Palaces of Sand and Gold - Tony is used to fighting bad guys not an overzealous grandparent. Already not a fan of Asgard, now he has to put up with interruptions to the Stark family Earthgardian vacation and attempts to end it early.

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Chapter 2 - Here Be Dragons - It's not easy being green... or having wings, talons, and a little owner having a minor tantrum.

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Chapter 3 - Broken... Hearted? - Tiny tragedy visits and over tired Ash.

Notes

The newest heir of Asgard gains a companion and a life lesson!

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See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Palaces of Sand and Gold

Chapter Summary

Places of Sand and Gold - Tony is used to fighting bad guys not an overzealous grandparent. Already not a fan of Asgard, Tony has to put up with interruptions to the Stark family vacation. Some interruptions can be tolerated.... but this, this is just dirty pool! Tank tops, board shorts, flip flops and a Malibu vacation square off against the expectations of royalty as the battle for the newest heir of Asgard heats up! Queens Grace Verse AU, Can be read alone. 10-24-2014 COMPLETE

Chapter Notes

This started from a comment that jldw sent me where we tossed around thoughts on what His Odin-ness would do in the case of a custody struggle if Tony and Loki ever had a kid. Now if it was a full breakup between Tony and Loki, I think that legally Odin and his Logmars would kick Stark and his Si lawyers asses. After all third in line for the throne until Thor starts popping out kids surely beat being heir to Stark International. At least as far as Odin is concerned.

But this isn't a full on custody battle. It's just a parental struggle against an overzealous grandparent.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Palaces of Sand and Gold

PermaLink for Art Work <https://rennemichaels.tumblr.com/post/144546608318/places-of-sand-and-gold-tony-is-used-to-fighting>

Palaces of Sand and Gold

It's not that Tony wasn't happy being Loki's partner.

He was.

Honestly who wouldn't be? The guy was sex on long legs with cheekbones to die for. Sure, Tony had to occasionally put up with that snooty superior sneer of his when he did something *'the prince'* considered too low-brow to be ignored. And maybe Tony wasn't too wild about the guy having more mood swings than a playground and the fact that when aggravated, he was a little free with the bibbity-boppity-boo.

But overall? At the end of the day? Yeah, he was happy.

He loved Loki, he loved their son. And he was very happy. Except for one thing that did bother him...

Asgard.

OoooO

Holding the pail full of supplies, Asbrand stood watching Tony put on his suit. Even though he knew there was no good reason to, not with Jarvis watching the child like a hawk, Dummy holding tightly onto the back of his son's shirt and You having a good grip on his pants leg, Tony worried. When his visor was lowered over his head, Tony felt a momentary spasm of panic. It only took a few seconds for the helmet to connect and start sending him visuals, but he still remembered the near disaster with Ash at the beginning of their California vacation.

Two seconds of unsupervised opportunity. The kid was definitely Loki's son. It only took two damn seconds for the little brat to skin out of the shirt dummy was grabbing on to and start running amuck in the lab.

Taking advantage of the suit's lack of mobility in confined spaces, the little shit had run and jumped over tools and slid laughing under tables like the mini-ninja in training that he was.

Tony blamed Loki for that. Seriously, who teaches battle dance to a preschooler? If he kept this up, the kid would be able to kick Tony's ass by the time he was ten. Which, if Tony knew Loki, was probably what his bastard partner was aiming for.

Calling out, '*Catch Me Daddy*' Ash had repeatedly dashed from one end of the lab to the other. If it hadn't been for the kid slipping as he ran across the hood of Tony's 1969 Lamborghini Miura P400S, Tony might never have caught the little brat. Of course, catching a kid while wearing gauntlets was tricky and, frankly, not something Tony ever wanted to have to do again. Ash ended up not only with a big bump on his head from hitting it on the windshield when he slipped, but also abrasions and black and blue marks on his arm from where Tony had grabbed him, desperate to keep the child from face planting onto the concrete floor.

By the time it was over, Ash was sobbing, half in pain and half in anger at his fun being cut short. Jarvis and the 'bots were in an uproar and Tony was lucky that Loki hadn't killed him.

Maybe ten minutes later in the living room, having already laid out the supplies Loki wanted, Minion approached Tony.

"Ice bag, Sir?" Minion asked in the overly jolly voice that Tony just could not program out of him. He suspected Trickster interference. The 'bot's fishy face grinned at him as it held out a medical freezer pack in a terrycloth pouch. Having yelled a few unwise words at Jarvis during the chase, Tony knew that Minion was going to be his only source of sympathy today.

Gratefully accepting the offered ice bag, Tony placed it on the bump on the back of his head. The one he had gotten after the God of Righteous Indignation had hit him for not properly supervising their child.

"I hope you feel better soon, Sir. Please let me know if you would like some aspirin." Minion chirped cheerily, his 'face' screen showing a fish with a razor sharp under bite flipping lazily.

Seated on the brown mid-toned leather couch, all the light stuff having been replaced as soon as Prince Grubby Paws had started crawling; Loki was wiping tearstains from Ash's cheeks. As well as all the other disgusting fluids that children produce when they have a meltdown. Holding the boy's little face firmly, Loki patted a damp washcloth across tear tangled lashes one last time and asked, "Why did you make daddy chase you, darling?"

Opening his eyes wide, Ash's little mouth puckered in confusion, as if he couldn't even imagine why his Möhdy would even ask him such dumb question. Not that he would ever say that to Loki, He was, after all a pretty smart little kid. However, after a moment to consider the question, he replied.

"Daddy runs funny in his metal suit."

"So he does, Little Sword. Many things your daddy does are amusing. More than he knows, I suspect."

"Hey. I can hear you, ya know."

"However," Loki continued ignoring Tony and keeping his voice calm, "You can't expect to run around in daddy's lab without becoming injured."

"Getting an owie," he explained as the boy's brows furrowed questioningly.

"Yes?" Loki queried. His tone and pointed stare held Aśbrand's gaze until the child nodded in agreement. "Do you run in móðir's work shop?" Loki asked, gently brushing green glowing finger tips soothing across the now fading purple bump on the side of Aśbrand's head.

"No," Aśbrand muttered, hanging his head and pouting just a bit. Obviously bummed that the petting and comforting were over and his parental unit was now working on today's object lesson.

"And why is that?" Loki asked, lifting the small chin to give his son a meaningful look.

"'cause I'll get hurt."

"Ah?"

"Because I will get hurt," Aśbrand corrected himself hurriedly.

"Indeed. No more running in daddy's lab because you will get hurt."

"Or waiting until I'm in my suit and making me run after you," Tony grouched, shifting his ice pack.

The corners of Loki's lips curled up. "Indeed. No matter how funny you think it might be, no more making daddy chase you." Loki bopped the child lightly on the nose with a finger, the creases of his tight little smile deepening. "Even if daddy does look funny running in his metal suit."

OoooO

And since the kid was a five year old 'Rules Lawyer', Aśbrand hadn't done that again. But just to be sure, Tony was still having both 'bots hold him while he suited up.

The suit Tony used to lower them to this otherwise inaccessible pocket of beach was currently folded into its suitcase form, and Tony was leaning against it while he helped his son build a series of sand castles. And despite what certain meddlesome adopted father-in-laws thought, Tony was very serious about ensuring the safety of his son and partner, so a Jarvis powered suit was standing guard nearby, with two more powered up and watching from the overhanging terrace, just in case.

They had built several different castles this afternoon. Once a structure was declared finished, Tony would take a few pictures to pop in his Dropbox. Afterwards, he and Ash would destroy it using a variety of plastic figures. Tony favored the Iron Man and Loki figures of course, while

Ash's current favorites were a tyrannosaurus rex and a winged dragon.

Like any kid, Aśbrand could get into having his tyrannosaurus join plastic Loki in destroying the castle walls while his dragon helped plastic Iron Man blast the towers down.

Especially when Tony joined in with such enthusiasm, not that he liked playing with plastic toys or anything.

However, Aśbrand honestly enjoyed building things more than he liked destroying them. Non-destructive tendencies in a child of Tony Stark and the God of Chaos? If it hadn't been for the kid having his eyes and hands, Tony would have wondered if perhaps Loki had cheated on him.

However odd that might be, Tony often consoled himself that the kid was young and there was plenty of time for the boy to learn to appreciate a really good explosion.

These thoughts had barely crossed the engineer's mind when about twenty yards down the beach, a bright light shot down, 'exploding' sand positively everywhere.

"Heimdall!" Tony snarled up to the heavens while using his hat to protect Aśbrand's face from the blowing sand. "What did I tell you about trespassing on private property? And you better hope you didn't wake Loki up from his nap! He's in a really pissy mood this afternoon!"

Tony knew there was no way that this wasn't another delegation informing them that Loki and Aśbrand were long overdue in returning to Asgard. About two and a half months overdue as far as Asgard was concerned. As if Tony gave a shit what Asgard, or rather, what the Grand Poobah of Asgard thought. When the billionaire had scheduled this family outing, he had purposely not mentioned that he intended his family to spend the entire summer in California. And if Odin was not pleased, well that was just an extra cherry on Tony's Smug Sundae, wasn't it?

OoooO

Predictably, Thor and Jane had shown up first at the three week mark, which is when Tony had dropped the bomb and told him they were staying on Earth all summer.

Shocked, Thor turned wide eyes to his brother.

"Don't look at me like that, Thor." Loki shrugged, comfortably dressed in baggy beach shorts and a loose tank top. He slouched against the back of the couch, resting one ankle on his bare knee, flexing his foot back and forth so his leather flip-flop made small slapping noises against the heel of his foot.

"What?" He demanded after several long moments. "I am not the head of the House of Stark." He reached to Tony who was sitting close to him on the couch, tucking his hand under the inventor's. "If you have something to say about this, take it up with Anthony."

Tony just smirked. He was not the only one in the room, or even in Asgard who knew that the only time his gorgeous partner actually agreed to anything without ferocious arguments or fierce negotiations was when Tony was doing what exactly what Loki wanted him to do.

"Sorry, Thor. I have SI paper work to catch up with and I want Ash to have a California summer like I used to have as a kid."

Jane blanched, no doubt thinking of the shit storm that this news was going to cause at the next royal breakfast. "You're spending the whole summer here?" She looked simultaneously upset and envious.

“Sure, Janie. You two are welcome to stay a while. But we’re not going anywhere until September ends.”

“I wish I could,” She said honestly, plucking at her elaborate Æsir dress. “But Tony, the last of August is when summer ends.”

“Yeah? And the damn parks are packed. I’m waiting until September to take Lo and Ash to Disneyland, Legoland, Universal Studios, Sea World and a couple of the water parks.”

“And my spa.” Loki interjected threateningly, brows lowered.

“And Loki’s spa.” He instantly agreed, nodding. “We’re going to finish up with a week at the Miramonte Resort in Palm Springs for some pure Loki time. You know, pampering and spending obscene amounts of money shopping and fine dining.”

“Brother,” Thor chided. “You can shop and dine on Asgard, you do not need to spend an entire week here on Midgard to do so.”

Planting his feet on the ground, Loki sat up straight. With elbows spread and hands firmly on his knees, he somehow managed to look every bit as intimidating in his beach wear as he did in his armor. “Thor, listen to me carefully. I plan on being exhausted after spending three weeks chasing around after Anthony and Aśbrand at these ridiculous mortal entertainment complexes.” Eyes narrowed to gleaming green slits and lip curling into a snarl, he continued menacingly, “I *‘will’* have a week to relax somewhere without being baked in the sun and covered in sweat and sand before returning to court or someone will pay the price.” He bared his teeth in an unfriendly smile, “Do not make that *‘someone’* be you.”

Thor looked pleadingly at Tony, who merely shrugged. “I promised him a spa week, Thor, I’m not taking the cranky bastard back to Asgard until he has it.”

OoooO

Frigga had showed up for a week in July. While she did halfheartedly attempt to convince Loki that they should end their vacation sooner, Tony thinks she mostly came to unwind and spend time with her son and grandchild without stupid Asgardian protocol getting in the way.

OoooO

Tony really wasn’t surprised when Odin showed up alone, in full king garb, one day in mid-August. Given the heads up by Jarvis, Tony and Aśbrand snuck down to hide in the lab while Odin and Loki *‘talked’*.

Father and son played ball with Dummy and You, and most definitely did not run in the lab, especially not across Daddy cars. They could barely hear the shouting through the thick glass doors, so obviously it was a relatively calm talk. After an hour, Jarvis sounded an all clear and they joined the father and son on the terrace while waiting for lunch to arrive.

“Grand Sire!” An exceedingly casually dressed Aśbrand dashed up the stairs. He was wearing colorful board shorts, a tank top and little leather flip-flops, which was the Tony imposed Stark Family *‘We-Aren’t-In-Asgard-Thank-God’* Uniform for Malibu. The dark haired tousled headed child clambered up on Odin’s lap bouncing excitedly. “Guess what, Grand Sire? If I hold my nose, I can swim under water now!”

Odin raised his brows and became wide eyed. “Can you now?” He asked admiringly as his grinning grandchild nodded. “How wonderful. You know, I don’t believe your móðir or Uncle

Thor would even put their heads under water when they were your age.”

“And I can even open my eyes without a mask.” The child paused a moment, his large chocolate brown eyes pensive before qualifying that statement. “For only a little bit though. It stings.”

“But still. Even a little bit is an excellent start for such a small boy. I wager your parents are very proud of you.”

Kneeling on Odin’s knees, Aśbrand twisted his small, only slightly sticky hands into Odin’s cloak where it fastened to his chest plate. Tugging on the cloak to make sure his grandfather was paying sufficient attention, he continued, “And Möhdy turned in to a dolphin and Daddy took me on a ski thing and we raced. Möhdy won.”

“Well, he would, wouldn’t he? Your Móðir always wins once way or the other.” With a big smile, Odin confided, “Never bet against your Móðir, young man. You’ll never win. Grand Sire knows.” Loki ts’ed modestly but then shot an amused look at his partner.

“You try driving a jet-ski with a kid on your lap and see how many races you win,” Tony grouched, disgustingly shoving his hands into the pockets of his own pair of red hibiscus board shorts.

Loki stifled a snort of laughter.

“And guess what, Grand Sire? On a ‘nother day, Me and daddy were riding on the ski thing and we saw a whale.” He looked at Odin with serious eyes. “Did you know, Grand Sire, that it was as big as a house? Me and daddy were like a little bug to it.”

“No? Really?” Odin asked, acting amazed for the child’s sake. “So what did you do then?”

“Well, we had to move away. Daddy says it’s not right to go close to them. I wasn’t afraid. But daddy said that you had to eat green peas if you get too close.”

Odin looked puzzled at that, glancing surreptitiously towards Tony and Loki, asking for some clarification. Loki who was dying trying not to laugh was absolutely no help.

“I don’t like peas so then I said okay, but wasn’t afraid.”

“Of course you weren’t,” Odin declared stoutly. “A brave boy like you wouldn’t be, of course.”

“Seriously, Stark?” Loki chortled. “You threatened our son with peas? Green ones?”

Tony snatched a small pillow off the divan, tossing it at Loki’s head. “You have to put up with Green *Peace*, you moron,” He snapped in mock anger as Loki fended off the pillow attack, batting it back towards him. “Not green *peas*.”

When neither god looked like they had a clue, Tony rolled his eyes. Shaking his head from side to side, he stuck the tip of his tongue out at them. An expression of his that never failed to elicit a giggle out of Ash and a tch out of his partner. Odin, of course, was not amused, but then almost nothing about Tony amused the king of ass-gard.

“Green Peace? An environmental group. I’m surprised you two don’t know who they are” Tony scoffed. “After all, their ship is called the Rainbow Warrior.”

Odin and Loki looked at each other and shrugged while Aśbrand ran and got a tablet so Jarvis could show Odin what the whale looked like. After climbing back on Odin’s lap, Aśbrand entertained his grandfather by showing him the stuff he had done so far this summer and

discussing in length each picture. This kept the two of them occupied until an SI courier arrived with the food for their quickly catered Al fresco picnic.

Odin's outfit got more than one sidelong look from the woman, but she was pretty discreet about it and took her introduction to the King of Asgard in stride, even offering the elder god a polite head bob as she took her leave.

When in Malibu, Tony and Loki favored the food at Moonshadows. They either had, like today, a picnic lunch delivered or took a quick drive down the scenic Coast Highway in one of Tony's convertibles for a quiet family dinner. Ash loved their crab cakes; Tony favored their tuna while Loki usually ordered the Curried Tiger Shrimp or some other seafood dish. In deference to Æsir tastes, Loki had told Jarvis to add a few portions of roast duck and Sake Braised Short Ribs to their normal order.

While Aśbrand picked through his D'Anjou pear salad, Odin again tried to get Loki to agree to come back to Asgard, telling him of the various topics coming up in council. "Thor is trying to help as much as he can..." the king trailed off.

"But not much help when it doesn't involve smashing things to get his own way?" Loki finished sweetly, toying with some of the burrata cheese accompanying his tomatoes.

Odin huffed and decided to change tactics. "What about you, young man?" He asked Aśbrand. "Surely you miss your Grand Dam and Pumpkin. I know they miss you."

Aśbrand lowered his head, brows pinched he rolled a hesitant eye towards his grandfather. "Yes..."

"Don't you want to come home and see them?" "Grand Dam and I took Pumpkin with us last week to the lake, but I know he misses you. You've been gone *a long time*."

"Did you give him his sugar lumps?" Ash asked so quietly that only Loki squeezing his knee warningly kept Tony from jumping in and telling the old fucker to quit trying to manipulate his kid.

"Of course." Was Odin's hearty reply. "I promised, didn't I? And Grand Dam packed some of his favorite white carrots just like she promised. We would never break a promise to our little Flame."

With the tip of his little tongue poking out just a bit, a habit he'd picked up from Tony, Aśbrand regarded his grandfather a moment before flicking a quick look towards his parents. Loki tilted his head inquiringly, encouraging the boy with a quick nod.

"No. But Grand Sire. But, but..." Aśbrand stuttered a moment before continuing in a rush. But **'T'** promised Lady Pepper I would help her build a raft for Lego River. She's not very good at building things, you know." He flashed a hesitant smile at Odin, before tossing Tony a more sly look. "That's why she puts up with daddy."

"Seriously, Ash?"

"But she says, daddy." The boy insisted in a small amused voice, poking a pear bit around on his plate with his small fingers not meeting any adult eyes.

Before Odin could argue any further, Loki addressed the boy kindly with a furtive smile. "I think this once... Once, mind you. We could have a tablet on the table while we're eating. Aśbrand, why don't you and Jarvis show Grand Sire Lego Park? And maybe all the other places your father *'promised'* to take you before we go home?"

Aśbrand perked up. “Really Möhdy? Grand Sire, do you want to see the movie park, too?” He asked eagerly, pears forgotten tugging on Odin’s sleeve. “They have minions there!”

Odin was not really happy with where this was going, but he masked it well enough for the child not to notice. Asking instead, “But doesn’t your móðir have a minion already?” He was puzzled, obviously not quite sure why his grandson would want to see another one, especially since Asgard had thus far been able to distract the child from his mortal father’s obsession with the mechanical.

Laughing, Aśbrand slipped down from his chair. “Not a fish Minion. Little yellow d’picable ones. Wait, I’ll show you.”

“Hands, Ash,” Tony yelped. “What did daddy say about touching his electronics with sticky grubby paws?”

“Don’t.” The boy said flatly, obviously trying to imitate the resigned tone Tony’s usually used when he reminded the boy for the um-teenth time. Wrinkling his nose, he held his hands up to oh-so-annoying daddy. And waited with an air of long suffering patience for Tony to wipe them.

“That’s right. Don’t.” Tony agreed, using a hastily damped cloth napkin to clean fruit juice, crab bits and whatever other greasy sticky stuff his heir had coating his perpetually grimy little digits.

Moments later, a washed out blue eye and a pair of lively brown ones were studying the various pictures that Jarvis tossed up on the tablet. Loki hadn’t even finished his Maple Crème Brûlée before Tony could tell that Odin had given up on enticing his only grandson home early.

At least for now.

OoooO

With Bi-Frost propelled sand swirling everywhere, Tony spit several times trying to get it off his lip and dusted it out of Ash’s hair. By the time he’d cleaned it, the best he could off of Ash’s face and looked up, four of Odin’s Einherjar were trooping across the beach towards them.

"Young prince," The lead guard, a man named Ivor, called, “Your Grand Sire sends for you. He has searched all the realms and found you a poki dreki egg and it is almost ready to hatch."

“DADDY!” Aśbrand screeched, almost shattering Tony’s ear drum. “Did you hear that? Grand Sire has found me a pocket dragon for my very own!”

“Yeah, I heard Ash,” Tony said, juggling to keep the squirming child from falling as he practically vibrated with excitement.

“A pocket Dragon, Daddy! Of my own! Did you hear!?”

“Yeah, buddy, I heard. After that shriek you just did, I bet everyone in Los Angeles heard, too. And daddy doesn’t think he’ll be hearing anything else this afternoon. What did I tell you about yelling into people’s ears?”

Aśbrand turned big brown eyes momentarily towards Tony, giving his father his very best contrite puppy dog look. Which was as perfect, as it was contrived. However, even knowing it was a put on, Tony couldn’t help but soften.

“I do apologize most humbly daddy--”

“I’m sorry, Ash. On Midgar—Earth rather, we say ‘I’m sorry’.”

Aśbrand's tongue peeked out a moment as he peered closely, trying to gauge Tony's mood. Apparently reassured that his father wasn't angry, or at least wasn't angry at him, the five year old returned to bouncing in Tony's arms, tugging on his swim tank as if trying somehow to tow Tony closer Odin's trusted Einherjar commander.

"I am exceedingly sorry, Daddy."

Tony sighed, dropping his forehead down on his son's still slightly sandy hair. One mortal teaching English phrasing and slang could not hope to compete against a battalion of Æsir attendants charged with teaching and enforcing princely manners.

He really hated Asgard.

"I surely did not mean to hurt your ear. But Daddy, it's a pocket dragon." Ash's voice trembled with delight. "Grand Sire has found me a pocket dragon. They can talk to you Daddy. I know Grand Sire got me a green or a gold one. He knows I like those colors bestest."

Defeated, Tony sighed. There was no way in hell that any theme park in the world could beat out a mini-dragon that mind bonded with its owner. Hell, it was the arcane equivalent of a Lassie that didn't need a narrator. And who could fly.

Apparently, the lack of instant enthusiasm on his father's part worried the small boy.

"Daddy." Ash's hands twisted in Tony's shirt as he looked at him pleadingly. "If we are not there when it hatches, it will choose someone else." He gave Tony his best doe eyes. "Please, Daddy." He begged his voice breaking, tears starting to gather on his lashes.

Tony rolled his eyes, catching sight of Ivor who was trying, almost successfully, to hide a smirk, the light in commander's eyes dancing gleefully.

"Fine, yes." He let Ash slip back down onto the beach. "Gather up your stuff. We'll leave as soon as we wash the sand off and can get dressed. Don't forget your flip-flops this time. Daddy isn't coming back down here for them. Again." He scrubbed his hands irritably through his hair. "A little transportation help here, Jarvis, if you don't mind." He asked the Jarvis powered suit.

"Not at all, Sir." Jarvis assured him as the two Watcher Suits descended slowly from the terrace above them.

"Lo still sleeping?"

"Indeed, Sir."

Tony pointed at the suits. "Unless you guys can fly, you are going to have to hitch a ride with them to get up to the house. 'cause let me tell you, there is no way in hell that Heimdall is burning any damn knot patterns into the terrazzo on my terrace or walkways. I just had that shit fixed from Odin's visit."

As his own suit finished clicking into place around him, he said, "Jarvis, I want you to take Ivor up personally. Wake Lo up and tell him the good Captain needs to speak to him *immediately*."

Tony grinned nastily at the stricken look the Æsir warrior couldn't quite hide. "You, my friend, get to explain to Prince Loki why he is going to miss the week long resort stay he's been looking forward to *all damn summer*."

Aśbrand ran over excitedly thrusting his loaded pail into Tony's gauntleted hands, while the

stricken guards exchanged sympathetic looks with their leader.

“Come on, son.” Tony told the ecstatic child in front of him, holding out his gauntleted hand.

“Autumn in Europe, perhaps? With a finish at that Palace Hansen Kempinski place in Vienna? Let’s take one last sweep to make sure we haven’t missed anything, while you help Daddy think of some really fun activities for next year. We need stuff that doesn’t involve sand and beaches. That will keep us occupied while the lucky Captain Ivor breaks the news to your móðir that we’re leaving before his promised shopping spree.”

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, even if it's just a, 'I liked JJJ or KKK was confusing. If you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine.

Beta'd by the most splendiferous Stella!

Here Be Dragons

Chapter Summary

Here Be Dragons The Stark Family vacation ends early and they return to Asgard to wait for Ash's dragon to hatch.

Chapter Notes

My Solstice Pressie to all my lovely readers!

Beta's by the ever patient Stella Ykmust and the most splendiferous Emu Sam! Can I get a Woop-Whoop!

Remember, comments, kudos and book marks are like digital chocolate... And I love me some chocolate.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Chapter 2 – Here Be Dragons

Tony left an excitedly vibrating Ash, and a much less pleased Loki, in Frigga's private receiving room to regale her with an explanation of why they had returned early from their vacation. He stomped into Odin's ornate private study without knocking.

"You totally owe me," Tony snarled at the unexpectedly armor-free, white bearded figure sitting at the desk, looking over documents.

Eye widening in surprise, Odin sat back with a frown. "I most certainly do not," the King of Asgard said firmly, calmly lacing fingers across his richly clad belly. "I did nothing but make it possible for my grandson to acquire a much coveted pet. One which will help keep him safe." The side of his mouth twisted in a wry smile. "A pet not even my own children had, as Thor has repeatedly informed me this last week."

Tony stomped irritably around in a small circle, partially trying to relieve some of his frustration and calm down a bit before he lost it, partially hoping more than a bit of sand had survived the trip to spread slippery grit all over Odin's floor. Stopping right in front of Odin, Tony folded his arms across his chest with a huff. "No. You totally do. Loki is going to be a total bastard for at least the next two weeks. So much so I might just convince him that we need to stay in our palace apartment rather than heading to the manor. That way you can enjoy his mood as much as I do."

Tony at last had the satisfaction of seeing Odin blanch.

"Stay here?" Loki asked from the doorway. Behind Loki, Tony could just make out the piping tones of a delighted child, who was apparently talking a mile a minute to Frigga in the sitting room.

Shooting one last hateful glare at Odin, Tony turned towards his partner, plastering, something that

could possibly be a smile on his face. “I think so. Yeah. For a couple of weeks. Perhaps a month or two, I haven’t decided. Problem?”

Loki could almost see Odin holding his breath while he considered this; Tony gave him a meaningful look. Loki hated staying in the palace for even the few days a year when they normally had to. What in the Nine was Tony thinking to suggest weeks? Although, come to think of it, newly hatched untrained dragons were destructive.... And they were willful at the best of times, when paired with a child who, while fairly well behaved, was not firm of mind yet....

Loki raised his hands in exaggerated surrender, only the tiniest hint of a smile curling the corners of his mouth. “Tony you are the head of the house of Stark, and thus, to those of us in your household, your word is law.”

Tony could almost feel the low grade alarm rolling off Odin.

“If it is your desire that we stay in our palace quarters, it is certainly not for me to argue,” he added with a sharp grin. All three of them knew full well that the lack of argument would last only for as long as Loki agreed with whatever Tony was decreeing.

OoooO

“Móðir?” Tony felt the bed jostle as a small body clambered up onto it, using his rib cage as a stepping stone. “Múttu! You need to get up; we need to go check on my egg.”

Tony would’ve liked to have stayed sleeping. He wished he could’ve pretended not to hear what was going on, but he knew that was impossible. There was no way that Loki was going to buy him not noticing Ash, when the child was sitting on Tony’s hip as he shook his mother. Inasmuch as he didn’t want to have to get up and deal with this — and he really, really didn’t — he knew that taking care of whatever problem Ash had was much better than facing the flames shooting out of Loki’s finger tips for allowing their son to wake him.

*Loki was **not** a morning person.*

Reluctantly, Tony reached out an arm, snagging Aśbrand around his stomach and pulling him over to Tony’s side of the bed. Thank God it was a big bed, because the kid flailed.

“Hey. Hey. Hey. Be still,” Tony admonished, as sternly as he could in an almost soundless whisper. “Ash buddy are you trying to get us in trouble?” Tony breathed into the ear of the now relatively still child. “You know how cranky Mommy gets if we wake him up too early. What time is it anyhow?” Tony pried his other eye open, noting that that there still wasn’t any daylight showing through the balcony curtains.

“Jarvis, what time is it?”

A tiny beep sounded on Tony’s nightstand. Instead of answering him directly Jarvis, coward that he was, had decided to text him so as to let a sleeping Loki lie. Not that Tony blamed him. An early-woken Loki was a category five hurricane with a tsunami on the back side, definitely not something you really wanted to deal with if you could avoid it.

Tony tapped his phone.

What the fuck?

“Ash buddy, what do you even doing up? Do you know it’s only four forty-five in the morning?”

Squirming until he was turned towards Tony, Aśbrand whispered in ear, “But Daddy, we need to go check on my egg.”

“Four forty-five Ash.”

“But what if it is hatching right now?”

Tony slumped back onto his pillows. While it was true the egg could hatch any moment, it could also be any time in the next several days.

*Wait a minute? How was this **his** problem?*

“Sport, you need to go get Grand Sire and have him egg watch with you.”

“Okay!” Ash whispered excitedly, accidentally elbowing Tony in the chest as he rolled over and scrambled off the bed. Rapid pattering of bare feet sounding as the kid ran towards their still open bedroom door.

“Jarvis,” Tony called out softly, rubbing his bruised chest, “Let the nurse know where Ash is heading and alert whoever is on guard at the door that they are to escort Mister Wiggly Pants to Odin. And only to Odin. Make sure they know the kid is not to come back until he has *seen and spoken* to Odin.”

OoooO

“Sir?” Jarvis’ worried voice sounded in Tony’s earpiece. Jarvis could have just used the regular speaker, but when they were in staying in the palace, he normally preferred not to draw attention to his network. Said private network, being a source of irritation to both Odin, and the palace’s maintenance staff.

“Sir. I really do think you need to go to the west hall immediately.”

By the time Jarvis’ voice finally breached the walls of creativity Tony had surrounded himself with, he noticed it had that that *Note-of-impending-doom* that Tony had come to recognize as the his last warning before Loki was notified of something Tony didn’t necessarily want him to know about. He glanced at the time strip running along the bottom of his screen. Particularly since Loki was most likely in the middle of some delicate negotiation with High Elves or Pigmy Dwarfs, and would kill someone if he had to leave before he had nailed them to an unfavorable contract or treaty. This meant that if Tony didn’t solve whatever had gotten Jarvis’ electronic panties in a twist, he would be the first someone his god went after.

Tony had almost made it to the family’s west hall receiving room when the faint growls, thumps and whistling noises that had been getting steadily louder were suddenly drowned out by an enormous crash that seemed to go on forever.

What the—

Tinkle-y settling noises were followed a scant second later by a Puma-sized, massively furred grey cat racing out of the room. Ears flat against its head, tail puffed up like a bottle brush, claws scraping on the stone floors, Loki’s cat Skygge almost bowled Tony over in his haste to get away from whatever the hell had just occurred in the royal family’s private receiving room.

Sprinting the last few yards, an alarmed Tony skidded to a halt a scant few paces into the room. Stunned, he surveyed the devastation that one small child, one tiny fledgling, and one annoyed cat had apparently created. Okay, so the cat weighed ninety pounds, and often jumped from the

courtyard onto a second story balcony. But still. It didn't make sense; even as a kitten, Skygge had been far too dignified and well-mannered to jump on a table, let alone take out a chandelier. Before Tony could even ask a horrified Ash what the hell had happened, he found himself being dive-bombed by an overly excited green fledgling dragon, all of six weeks old.

"Ash!" Tony yelled, waving his hands to keep the dragon from snatching his hair, or scratching his face. "You call off Sir George right this damn minute or I'm having Jarvis call Mom!"

OoooO

By the time a quickly summoned Loki had arrived, Sir George had pulled most of the hangings off the wall, shredded two of the long balcony curtains, and divested most of the flat surfaces in the room of their assorted ornamentation. Unable to leave the room, Tony had tucked himself in a corner. Ash waving the damn lizard off of him was the only reason Tony wasn't more scratched up than he was.

Just how fucked up was it that a five year old had to defend him from a stupid flying lizard that Tony had freaking named? Sure, he could have taken the damn thing down; he had mini-repulsors in each pocket, but he was pretty sure he couldn't do it without seriously injuring or killing the dainty dragonet.

"What is the meaning of this?" Loki demanded hotly. His accusing eyes not only burned holes in Tony, Ash and Sir George, but he also swiveled to glare at the newly arrived guard and nurse who had followed him into the room. The wild eyed, sweat covered and panting Skjálf, and the unfortunate Captain Ivor, quailed under his gaze. As well they should have; they were supposed to be watching the kid, i.e., Aśbrand Lokison Stark, third in line for the Throne of Asgard, and sole heir to the House of Stark.

With a raucous shriek, the upset dragon launched himself off the top of a destroyed balcony curtain and arrowed towards the newcomers.

Almost faster than Tony could see, Loki made with the magic hands. Plucking a blanket out of his fuck-knows-where dimensional pouch, he tossed it into the air just in time to entangle the little dragon before he could reach them. Using those Ninja fast moves of his, Loki twirled the blanket around until he was holding a fuzzy dragon burrito with only a tiny nose sticking out one end.

"Yeah. Well. Yeah," Tony huffed. Lifting Ash off his lap, he scrambled to his feet, tugging his Def Leppard t-shirt into place. "I could have done that too if someone had given me a bag of infinite holding last Christmas, like I asked for."

"Móðir, is Sir George alright?" Aśbrand asked anxiously, standing on tip toes and reaching for the hissing, struggling bundle Loki was holding. Loki promptly lifted it out of the child's reach.

"I think perhaps Sir George needs take a nap and calm down." Holding his free hand over the area of cloth that was covering the tiny dragon's head, Loki twisted his fingers a few times until a pale green light hovered over the blanket a moment before sinking down into it and disappearing. After a few moments, the blanket covered bundle grew quiet and still. Loose hair falling over his shoulder like a curtain of midnight, Loki bent down and passed off the bundled up dragon, spearing the child with a glance so severe that made the boy's eyes go wide. "Now, mQgr, perhaps you can tell me what happened?"

Tony was not in any way, shape, or form the family's disciplinarian, he was far too impatient. Therefore, he was also the testier of the two of them when it came to dealing with the constant small crises that were part and parcel of raising a kid. The time Ash had managed, even before he

could read, to somehow slap the right combination of keys, and overwrite several hours of work came painfully to mind. Doubtless if Jarvis hadn't been in the middle of an upgrade he would have alerted Tony before it happened. But he was, and so he didn't. Tony's meltdown concerning Jarvis, Ash, and life in general, had been epic. So much so, that Loki had awed Ash, by putting *Tony* in the time out corner, and keeping him there by magically sticking his palms to the wall. After the first few minutes, he'd also stuck Tony's teeth together.

So yeah. Ash was well aware that under the right circumstances, it was possible to piss Daddy off. But it always came as a surprise to the kid on those rare occasions when he managed to do it to his Móðir.

Head down, and avoiding looking at either his mother or still panicky nurse, Aśbrand placed Sir George on a nearby overstuffed chair and gently unwrapped him. Arranging the little dragon, so he rested on his softly scaled belly, Ash straightened the folded wings until the small beastie was in his normal resting position.

"Aśbrand?"

Shoulders stiffening at the admonishing tone he was being addressed with, chubby fingers stroked the slightly peaked, iridescent green scales that made up the dragon's back ridge. "Skygge wouldn't play with us," Ash muttered, hunching his head a bit lower between his shoulder blades. "We just wanted to play. But S'gge kept hissing and walking away." Lower lip poked out, he tossed a sullen, slightly disgruntled glance at his nurse, Skjálfr. Or one that was sullen until he took in the promised retribution flashing in his nurse's eyes. Red spreading across his cheeks, Ash looked back down at his dragon before continuing. "Lady Skjálfr told us to leave him alone. But we weren't hurting him," the boy protested indignantly. "We just wanted him to play with us. But S'gge got mad and held S'George down and growled at him."

"Your Highness— " Skjálfr opened but stopped immediately when Loki flung up a hand.

Despite their rocky beginning, Skygge was Loki's now. So much so that everyone and their dogs were well aware of the fiery reprisals that Loki would rain down upon them if they upset the cat. The reverse was also true if they or their dogs so much as looked at Loki wrong when the feline was present. Retribution from above was not a behavior confined to Earth Cats apparently. And as Aśbrand well knew, Skygge was a lot more tolerant of the youngest members of the household teasing or annoying him than Loki was on the cat's behalf.

Folding his arms over his chest, Loki regarded the small child in front of him. "And then what happened?"

Peering up through his bangs, Ash mumbled, "I yelled at him."

"Skygge?"

"Yes."

"Was he hurting Sir George?"

Ash dug a toe in the carpet before answering. "No."

"And?"

"S'gge let S'George go, then hissed at me, and jumped on top of the wall."

"Do we mumble?"

“No, Móðir.” There was a long uncomfortable silence. Tony was digging through his pockets for something to clean the blood off his face, when Ash continued in a low voice. “Sir George didn’t think Skygge should hiss at me so he pulled his fur. And then Skygge hit him.”

“Did you tell Sir George to stop pulling Skygge’s fur?”

Possibly, it was time for him to chime in, if only to derail the possibility of one of them launching into a mini-meltdown. But before Tony could decide on the best way to stop this train wreck in the making, it was too late. Aśbrand straightened up, crossed his small arms tightly over his chest, and glared challengingly up at Loki. His posture almost mirror image of his mother’s stance. “He was being mean. Skygge’s bigger than Sir George, he shouldn’t have hit him.”

Lips tightening, Loki lifted a brow, his expression morphing into something that would have warned Tony himself to think twice about challenging him. “Did you tell Sir George to stop pulling Skygge’s fur?” Loki repeated in a voice that was markedly colder than any he normally used when talking to Ash.

Swelling up, perhaps in the face of parental disapproval, or perhaps in defense of his dragon, Ash was almost quivering with indignation.

“Well?”

“No!” The boy burst out scowling, an ugly red flush painting his cheeks. Apparently so angry at the remembered treatment of his pet, that his words spilled out in a tone that he’d never before used when addressing his mother. “I pushed Skygge off the garden wall for being so mean! And then he hissed at me again, so Sir George chased him into the Vanir garden. And then Skjálfr yelled at me to tell him to stop. So I ran away because she was being mean to!” Breathing heavily, and taking in the scowl that Loki now sported, Ash stamped his foot. “Skygge wasn’t even hurt!”

Tony buried his face in his hands. As if the hair and the eyes weren’t enough to prove that Ash was his, the kid was channeling Tony’s tactic of doubling down when he was caught dead to rights doing something wrong. Catching their eye, Tony waved Ash’s disheveled and dirt smudged attendants towards the hall. From their appearance, he surmised that they must have been frantically combing the gardens looking for the little bastard while he and his winged menace circled back around to the family quarters chasing Loki’s damn cat. A cat who, had he been less well-mannered and attuned to Loki’s wishes, could have sliced and diced the pair of them without any effort at all.

Narrowed eyes snapping with anger, Loki bent over until his face was almost level with Aśbrand’s. The kid wavered; Tony could see that he wanted to take a step back, but now channeling his inner Loki, he resolutely stood his ground in the face of what Tony admitted was one scary looking Trickster God.

“When you hit someone, or pull their hair, or push them off a wall, it is not for you to decide if it hurt them or not,” Loki said coldly. “Skygge was being very patient with the both of you today. I know this because neither of you have even a scratch to show despite your bullying him. Skygge controlled himself because he knew that Sir George is a baby who doesn’t know any better. You, however, are not a baby... And you have certainly been taught to know better. Yes?” Loki paused, head tilted he waited to see if Ash wanted to speak. After a moment of silence he continued. “Not only do you know better, you are *supposed* to be teaching Sir George how to behave, not encouraging him to hurt others. Look how badly he scratched Daddy; he probably scratched Skygge too when he grabbed his fur.”

Dropping his arms, Ash shot a sidelong glance at Tony.

“Eyes to me.” Loki snapped. Lower lip beginning to quiver, Ash hastily looked back at his mother, quailing as the magnitude of his transgression started to sink in. “What would have happened today if I hadn’t taught Skygge how to control himself when he was a kitten? Do you think a baby Poki Dreki could have escaped an almost fully grown descendant of Bygul? What would have happened if Grand Dam had come to see what all the commotion was about? Or worse, Lady Pepper, who doesn’t heal as we do?”

A tear slipped down one rounded cheek, and small fingers clenched as if they wanted desperately to grab onto something.

“Well?” Loki snapped in a voice that was so cold, it would make a Russian winter seem balmy.

“m’Sorry.” Ash said with a hitch, tears flowing freely down his pale face, his entire frame now shaking.

Relenting a bit now that Ash seemed to be taking his message to heart, Loki sighed, sinking down to one knee, he opened his arms. It only took half a heartbeat before a quivering Aśbrand accepted the offer of comfort and was tightly enfolded in his mother’s arms.

“Sir George is still a baby,” Loki whispered into Ash’s tousled brown hair, “But when he is grown, he will be capable of seriously injuring someone, just like Skygge. You have to teach him to behave, like Daddy and Móðir teach you.”

“But it’s hard,” Ash sniveled in a low quavery voice, his hands twisted tightly into Loki’s tunic, his face still buried beneath his chin.

“Of course it is. It’s hard for Daddy and Móðir too, but it’s worth it because we love you, and we want you to grow up knowing how to behave in a civilized manner.” After a few moments of rubbing small circles in Ash’s back, Loki jostled him a bit, before continuing in a more upbeat tone, “You don’t want Sir George to grow up acting like a wild bilgesnipe do you?”

While he didn’t reply, Ash did shake his head back and forth in a manner indicative of a soundless ‘no’. Of course it might not have been that at all. Perhaps he was just wiping tears, and who knows what else, on the front of his mother’s tunic.

“If you do what’s right, Sir George will too.” Shifting his grip, Loki pulled their son back a bit, so he could see the child’s tear splattered eye lashes and drooping lips. “We don’t pick on people who don’t want to play with us. If you respect Skygge when he wants to be left alone, so will Sir George. Do you understand?”

“...yes?” The tiny voice was low, and there was more than a hint of question in Aśbrand’s monosyllable answer.

Standing up, Loki’s hand smoothed his hair a bit before sliding down to pat Ash on his shoulder. “You sound a bit unsure. However, I am sure if you spend the next week in the nursery thinking about it, you will figure it out.”

Eyes wide, tears forgotten, Ash turned his head and looked beseechingly towards Tony. Not that that was going to do him the least bit of good.

“Hey, don’t look at me.” Tony waved a hand at his scratched face. “I am totally not feeling any intercession impulses. You’re the one who let Lizard-butt run amuck. And look at this place? It’s going to take Shay all day to clean up a mess that you caused.” Since Tony was trying to drive home a lesson...

Look at me being all responsible parent-y.

He absolutely could not cave when a lower lip poked out and he started getting wet little puppy dog eyes cast up at him from underneath unruly bangs. Still... That lip could start quivering again any moment, so he needed to finish up pretty quick. Glancing around the room as if surveying the damage, rather than avoiding Ash's pleading look, Tony pressed on, "I think maybe since Shay has all this work because of you and Georgie-boy, while you're being grounded, you should sweep the nursery every day so Shay doesn't have to."

Since, from Ash's point of view, Tony and Loki clearly did not love him enough, the kid's lower lip started quivering just as Tony had predicted.

A few minutes later, after apologizing to his nurse and duty guard, a woeful Aðbrand gathered up his sleeping dragon. Totally ignoring his evil, uncaring parents, a small pair of slumped shoulders disappeared down the hall towards an entire week of kiddo-incarceration.

OoooO

A few minutes later, with a quick twirl of magic hands, Loki held up an antiseptic wipe packet with one hand, while the other tossed a several more on a nearby end table. It was the work of a moment to rip it open and gesture for Tony to sit down on the couch so he could start cleaning the several scratches that were already starting to heal.

"What I don't understand," Tony said, causing Loki to *tch* in frustration as he winced and tried to avoid the stinging solution being wiped across his face, "is that I've seen the damn lizards before. All they freaking do is flit around looking pretty." Tony looked around again toting up the cost of the wreckage, "Did Odin get Ash a defective one?"

Ungentle hands buried in Tony hair, holding him still. "Tony, elves are the most disciplined and graceful beings in all the Nine Realms."

Tony lifted a brow skeptically, "Except for you, right?"

Loki huffed, and rolled his eyes dramatically, but Tony knew he was pleased. "Most Elfs are older than our Little Sword when they acquire one. At any rate, Poki Dreki take their mental tone from their owners." They exchanged troubled glances. "I think perhaps it is past time for our Flame to start his formal lessons. "

"What? His tutor has already started him on math, and reading. He's only five for crying out loud and he can read at better than junior high level." Although, there was that stubborn mischievous streak in the kid, like when Tony asked Ash to name basic shapes. A square became Dave, a cube became Jackie, a rectangle Dennis, and Drósbói was a circle. Admittedly, it was pretty funny at first. But if he doesn't cut it out and quit referring to them that way, the kid is going to grow up to be the only engineer in the Nine Realms who tells people to think outside the Jackie.

Tony jerked his head to one side, losing several strands of hair in the process. "Owwww. Ease up a bit, you're not doing dermabrasion."

Recapturing Tony's head, Loki continued his first aid, and said, "He needs to start learning deportment, and magic. With perhaps my mother teaching him weapons."

"What? Nuh-uh. No. We aren't going to turn him into a freaking sword slinger."

"Indeed, we are not. All of the fields I mentioned with emphasize poise and reinforce self-discipline.

He hated when Loki was right about kid stuff. Tony tried not to look sulky. He didn't succeed, but he did try. Loki just continued as if Tony wasn't glaring up at him for all he was worth.

"And then he can pass it on to that wretched dragon." Since Loki normally liked that *Wretched Dragon*, Tony knew that Scales had made it on to Loki's, *You Pissed Off MY Cat* list. A very scary list to be on, as Tony and several other Asgardians could testify. Loki tossed aside the used pad and opened another one, this time letting Tony stay still without the balding hair grab. "And since there will be mishaps along the way, we most likely will be staying here at the palace for a while." He looked around the completely trashed room with a smirk. "Solely to make it easier for my mother to give him weapon training."

"Oh. Well. Okay then. Yeah, sure. I can commute to the manor for the lab. No problem."

Loki frowned a moment in thought, making Tony forget what he was going to say next.

"One moment." Still frowning, Loki tapped the communication stud on his collar. "Janis. Memo to Darcy. Acquisition. Immediate. Roller blades. Protective gear. Roller Hockey supplies. Sizes, Aśbrand, and an assortment of incrementally larger child sizes. Also myself, Tony, Skjálfr, Ivor, Thor, and Fandral. Research for future procurement. Quidditch equipment, indoor. End Memo." Loki looked much happier as he released the stud.

Tony looked at Loki like he was crazy. Or rather crazier, since this was his beloved Reindeer Games after all. And frankly, more than slightly crazy was his god's base state. "Wait. You're grounding him... And buying him presents?" Not that Tony necessarily saw anything wrong with this, but that would be if he was doing it. His Bambi was supposed to be the responsible one. Tony's world was in danger of becoming adrift here. "Isn't that generally frowned upon in all those parenting articles that I ignore when Jarvis reads them to me?"

"Don't be ridiculous Tony. Ash isn't getting any presents while he is grounded to his room. However next week when he is ungrounded, we will have one very hyper child on our hands. And magic and weapons training are not the only thing that will teach a child discipline and how to work with others."

"Team sports?"

"Indeed. Sadly, his tutor sessions, naps and other training will take up most of the day." Loki put on his innocent face, meaning he was feeling anything but. "That means Aśbrand will have to practice or play these games in the evenings. This could possibly present a problem for a child who is limited to the royal wing of the palace after dark. I understand this roller hockey takes a good bit of space to play."

"Like the grand hall and the throne room space?"

Loki didn't have to answer; his vindictive smile told Tony all he needed to know.

OoooO

Later that evening while Loki was in the bathroom getting ready for bed, Tony whispered, "Jarvis?"

"Yes Sir?"

"I've always thought that Laser Tag would be a lot more fun if you played it while roller skating."

"Indeed Sir. I can see how that would appeal to you. I shall have Janis immediately add the

necessary equipment to Ms. Darcy's shopping list."

Palaces of Sand and Gold

by RenneMichaels



Wonderful commissioned piece by tasteofhiddles on tumblr

Permalink - <http://rennemichaelswrites.tumblr.com/post/103815369562/palaces-of-sand-and-gold-queens-grace-au-short>

Chapter End Notes

As always comments and reviews are greatly appreciated, even if it is just a I

liked xxx or zzz confused me. if you aren't a comment kind of person then bookmarks and Kudo's would be wonderful. They all help the story placement on the search engine. Many thanks to my faithful commenters and of course to all that have kudo'd and bookmarked in the past.

Chapter 3 - Broken... Hearted

Chapter Summary

Tiny tragedy visits an over tired Ash.

This is more the nature of a prequel, since Ash is younger than he was in the Dragon Stories of Chapter one and two.

As a Holiday gift to you all, I have decided to empty some of the snippets I am most likely never going to finish as tiny epilogues to their fics. Most are short, all will be un-beta'd so if you see some really horrible mistake, do let me know.

Chapter 3 – Broken... hearted?

There was magic and there was magic and then there was magic. And having lived in Asgard for the last few years, Tony was well aware of the different types of magic there were. For instance Loki's magic was all big, flashy, throwing out all the rules of science, doing things that were totally impossible, except impossible or not he did them with an elegant flick of his wrists.

And then there was the more common magic that the palace servants seemed to have down to an art. Tony was 100% certain that almost every servant in the palace had an invisibility cloak. Because truly that was the only way to explain how a cold glass of milk, and a plate with a cookie on it appeared at his elbow without either him or Ash noticing anything.

And then there was the last kind of magic, which was evidenced by glancing down at the snack that had been left for Odin's favorite/only grandson. Laying there on an intricately pierced parchment doily of some sort, precisely in the center of the delicately gold rimmed plate, the lone cookie was a fricken work of art. The damn thing defied logic. It wasn't just that the fucking chocolate chips were laid out in a pattern that was almost impossibly precise. Or that there was an absolutely even distribution of nut morsels baked into it. Or even, because there the dusting of powdered sugar was in a design that Tony was pretty sure was impossible for human hands to duplicate. Hell, looking at them, you would be tempted into swearing the damn thing was a computer-generated hologram created by a particularly OCD artist. Except... A hologram would not have tiny wisps of mouthwatering, chocolatey fragrance wafting up from it.

In short, the damn thing was perfect in every way, just as a cookie destined to be consumed by the only grandson of Asgard's king was required to be.

And, upon catching a glimpse of it, the child was now happy. This was good, because two hours ago, while the family was visiting Grand Dam, said beloved Hope of the House of Stark, had quickly become unhappy when his Móðir had to suddenly leave. Mediation between a subcommittee of the crown council and the fledgling Confederation of Progress was important, and unfortunately not scheduled around their plans for the day. Regardless of their plans for the day, personal responsibility was important, since Loki's Mischief Net was the movement's catalyst and House of Stark was the Confederation's technically secret, but not really, Angel Backer.

So yeah no matter how bad it messed up their plans, Loki, as the more politically knowledgeable of the two of them, did really have an obligation to assist.

At any rate, having his Móðir being called away on what was supposed to be their Family Day did not make for a happy kiddo. Mister Cranky's emotional state clearly worsened, as evidenced by the child's tightly crossed arms, and a lower lip that was becoming more and more pronounced.

"Tony, I think perhaps it would be a good idea to put Aśbrand down for a little nap," Frigga had suggested, settling down on the couch beside the child, and carding her fingers through his soft brown curls.

And yeah that was probably a good idea, since they were expected to be present at dinner that evening in the great hall.

So Tony headed towards their only occasionally used, palace apartment, with every intention of putting Ash to sleep. However, Ash spotted a pot of crayons he had forgotten he'd left there... And so they ended up sitting side by side at the nursery's work table with large sheets of paper in front of each of them. Ash, sitting on a booster seat, being reminded not to nibble on the crayons, as Tony idly sketched out designs with those same crayons because Jarvis had a tendency to lock down all his tablets when Tony had sole custody of the sprout.

It was during this period of time that one of the palace's ninja servants slipped in to bring Ash a mug of milk and a piece of high art work disguised as a chocolate chip cookie, which Ash delightedly picked up and then promptly dropped.

As Jarvis explained numerous times, some experts distinguish between tantrums and meltdowns. Neither was really a clinical term, but many behaviorists liked to describe a tantrum as somewhat a willful action of how a child chooses to express their feelings. A melt down purely emotionally driven and not at all controlled, the child isn't choosing to scream and drum their heels on the ground to get their way, it just happens.

Ash had a meltdown.

"But it broke," Ash cried completely beside himself, failing and wailing and having a fit.

"Well, yeah. Cookies are kinda fragile that way, Sport. And if you drop them, well, they break." Tony could have pointed out cookie fragility was behind the phrase that's the way the cookie crumbles, but he restrained himself. Instead he just hauled his son up and attempted to sooth him. "Look, kiddo, this isn't the end of the world, we'll ring the kitchen and get you another cookie. Okay?"

Seemed logical to Tony, but not apparently to the pride of his house. .

"Nooooooo! I want this cookie. Fix it daddy, fix it!"

Tony did not sigh. Tony had three doctorate degrees, however none of them even touched on the topic of repairing broken cookies.

"Little dude. Daddy doesn't do baked goods. Now if you want something welded, then I am your parent. But baking? No can do."

While Tony was being completely honest with the kid, something he and Loki were both on board with, it sadly was not what the munchkin wanted to hear. As witnessed by the fresh wave of tears and 'stuff' wetting the front of his shirt.

It was however Ash sliding down onto the floor to curl up on his knees and sob that kicked Tony's problem solving abilities into high gear.

Ash was old enough to know that if Tony was tapping on his phone there was a good possibility that he was giving instructions to Jarvis. Fortunately however for Tony, Asgardians were prone to gesturing more than the ethnic group of your choice that ate a lot of Pizza, and while Ash was not familiar with sign language, Jarvis was.

Years and years ago, as a protective measure Tony had been taught ALS. Apparently this was so he and Jarvis, the original one, could communicate secretly in the event of abduction. Which was probably a good idea, but what Jarvis normally used it for was to communicate with Tony behind Howard's back. Little things like, 'You might as well own up young Sir, your father has proof.' Or 'Please stay calm Tony, I have notified your mother, she is arranging a distraction.'

At any rate, when Tony's phone pinged, he said, "You know what? Let's look at your cookie again. Maybe daddy can fix it." Helping a sniffing Ash to his feet, he took him and the broken cookie over to one of the large windows so he could look at the cookie in a better light.

And to occupy the child as the palace staff used their super-secret ninja stealth moves to put a fresh cookie in a decorative metal box on the mantle. Tony's plan of course was to put the broken cookie in the box, do a Loki mumbo-jumbo hand wave and then magically pull out the repaired, ie replaced cookie.

It was a good plan, and it might have worked, if only Loki hadn't arrived before the replacement cookie did.

"Tony? I thought mother said you were putting Ash down for a nap?"

Tony was so busted. Rather than a napping child who would shortly wake in a sunny mood, he was currently in the possession of an overtired, tear and chocolate streaked child.

Rather than run and greet his mother like he normally would, Ash, too worn out by his meltdown, drooped at Tony's side.

"Yeah. Well," Tony shrugged, trying for nonchalant, "We were gonna take a nap. But we got coloring, and then the next thing you know the world is coming to an end because Ash's cookie broke."

Loki looked at him for a good hour and a half. Okay, fine, it was maybe a minute and a half in *real time*, but in *why did I marry this idiot* time, it was subjectively well over an hour

"Indeed. Perhaps we need to see what can be done about that, yes?"

The offending cookie bits were placed back on their plate, and then with a hand on each of his shoulders, Loki told Ash to touch the plate and concentrate on making the cookie one-piece again. As Ash concentrated Loki let a tiny bit of green magic trickle down through the child's finger tips until the plate glowed a bit. And the cookie parts fused together.

Ash picked up the cookie which was indeed in one piece and frowned. Partially from being carried around by a cranky toddler and partially from being rejoined the cookie was no longer perfect.

"But... it doesn't look right Móðir."

"And it almost never will. And that my son is lesson one, when something breaks, even if you can put it back together, it most likely will never be the same."

Ash scowled at the cookie, until Loki gently shook his shoulders. "Do you remember the pretty glass in Móðir's bathroom? The one with the gold veins, that you aren't allowed to touch? That

used to be broken, but Daddy fixed that for me back when we were courting. While it might not be perfect, you always thought it was pretty, yes?"

Ash transferred his gaze from the offending cookie, to his mother "Yessss." And okay, from the way Ash strung out his reply, it wasn't hard to follow his thoughts on a mangle yet repaired cooking never being the equal of Loki's Kintsugi tumbler.

Loki kissed the top of his head, "And that is lesson number two. Things don't always have to be perfect to be precious. Now, eat your cookie, before it breaks again."

End Notes

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[Complete List of Works](#)

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[Shifting Circumstances](#) WinterFrost - The Asset could not catch a break. Between asshat Hydra handlers making his days a living hell, there is this guy, or dog, or snake, or who the hell knows what else, wanting to be a pal. He couldn't remember the last time he'd had a friend, or if he'd ever had one. Friends are not supposed to be this damn annoying... Are they? Complete

.
[The Winter Wolf](#) WinterFrost - If there is one thing this damn mission did not need, it was a leather wearing bastard with horns getting between him and his target. Not that Loki gives a good god damn what Hydra Assassins want. Complete

.
[The Trouble with Tricksters](#) and [The Trouble with Tricksters Two](#) - Loki is kept in Stark Tower, but he is a NOT silent, dignified, lone figure, mostly avoiding the Avengers he is forced to share living quarters with. Instead he is an in your face brat. Who walks a fine line between annoying the shit out of all of them but doing it in a way that isn't blatant enough for anyone to stomp on him without an avenging Thor coming after them. Complete

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[Queens Grace](#) COMPLETE - After the New York attack, Odin has taken Loki's magic, made him mortal and imprisoned him. Odin then decided to take away one more thing from his second son, his memory going back for the last four years, making Asgard unsafe for Loki's reduced station. Frigga decides that Tony Stark's tower would make an excellent secure location for amnesiac Loki to be under house arrest.

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[Anthony of Asgard](#) - COMPLETE - After several years of being housed in Stark Tower as a state prisoner of Asgard, Loki is recalled to Realm Eternal. Devastated Tony is minus a lab partner, wingman and a snark buddy. Pepper has married, SHIELD is doing crazy shit. Despite occasionally seeing Bruce, Tony feels lonely despite being in a city full of people. However he's an engineer & a genius, he can fix this. If he can convince Queen Frigga and Odin All Father to go along with his plan.

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[Stark InterGalactic](#) COMPLETE - After years of Loki being a memory washed prisoner in Stark Tower, Tony misses him when he is gone. So, Tony formed a civil union with the Trickster. Their relationship has moved past friendship, but misunderstandings & a long

distance relationship caused serious problems.

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How Desperate Are You? COMPLETE – Loki has had a bad year, returning to Asgard and challenging Odin isn't making it any better, and... Sometimes stubborn happens. It may not seem to be in your best interest, but how desperate are you for a resolution? Loki is returned to Asgard and nothing good happens, but Loki isn't the only one with issues, Odin has plenty of his own, especially in the realm of A+ Parenting. Loki wants to escape Asgard, Odin and his past.

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Desperate for Change COMPLETE - Returning to Midgard after an absence of almost two years, Loki finds that as desperate for change as he has been, some changes will take time to get used to, especially concerning his relationship with Tony and Pepper.

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Earth is good thanks, can I talk to Loki COMPLETE - Steve Rogers did not spend seventy years in ice for stuff like this to be happening. Since desperate times call for desperate measures. He calls upon the one person he can think of who will help him. It's risky, but Steve is determined.

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Palaces of Sand and Gold and **The Littlest Trickster** COMPLETE Domestic One Shots in the Queens Grace Verse that can be read alone.

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